

## **Rebuilding from the Ground Up: User-Centered Methodology for Web Design Moves Non-Profit Organization into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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Microfinance projects are a proven approach for economic development, but an indicator of future success is that these projects involve a number of community partners, both in the U.S. and on the ground in the locale where the project will take place. As part of a series of microfinance projects in Sierra Leone, a pleasing partnership has developed between the Rotary Club of Indianapolis and Right Sharing of World Resources, which has personnel on the ground in Sierra Leone, one of three countries that it currently focuses on.<sup>1-3</sup> Although established in 1967, Right Sharing remains a small organization as compared with other NGOs and has not had the time or expertise to update its website or to take advantage of the power of social media for outreach and public relations. The presenters agreed to develop recommendations for a total redesign of Right Sharing's website and a social media marketing strategy. After a thorough analysis of Right Sharing's website, we inspected some 70 NGO websites to identify current trends in layout, design and navigation flow, including the websites of large, well-established international organizations such as Care and smaller organizations with more targeted missions.<sup>4-7</sup> Various screenshots of websites we considered to be impactful, that incorporated best practices and usability principles and that seemed to contain a "call to action" to potential donors, volunteers and supporters were grouped into a variety of collages for easy comparison. A preliminary new information architecture was developed to assist users in transitioning from one section of the website to another with more logical categories and a better organization of information under each category. One challenge is to integrate Right Sharing's substantial material about past projects, including images and audio, while still presenting the freshest and most compelling content about current and future initiatives.

1. Rotary Club of Indianapolis, <http://indyrotary.com/071013wp/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
2. Right Sharing of World Resources, <http://www.rswr.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
3. Care, <http://www.care.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
4. Alliance for African Assistance, <http://www.alliance-for-africa.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
5. Manna Foodbank, <http://www.mannafoodbank.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
6. Ambassadors for Life, <http://www.ambassadorsforlife.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).
7. Not for Sale, <https://www.notforsalecampaign.org/>, (last visited 3/14/2015).